



Legislative Council Staff

Nonpartisan Services for Colorado's Legislature

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Fiscal Notes Frequently Asked Questions

What is a fiscal note?

A fiscal note is prepared by Legislative Council Staff (LCS) for every introduced bill. A fiscal note includes a bill summary, relevant background information, and the impact of the bill on state and local government revenue and expenditures.

When does LCS start working on the fiscal note for a bill?

During the drafting process, the fiscal analyst is available to work with the bill sponsor and drafter to address fiscal questions concerning the bill idea. Once a bill is ready to introduce, analysts share confidential bill drafts with affected state agencies and begin to collect data to write the note. Prior to the bill's introduction, LCS needs the sponsor's permission to share the bill with state agencies. LCS begins working on fiscal notes prior to introduction in order to meet committee deadlines during the legislative session.

When will the fiscal note be published?

The fiscal note is published prior to a bill's first committee hearing. Fiscal notes are typically delivered to the bill sponsor no later than 24 to 48 hours before the bill's first committee hearing. Fiscal notes are posted online and distributed to all legislators after delivery to the bill sponsor.

How do I find out who the fiscal analyst is for a particular bill?

If a fiscal note has already been published, the analyst's contact information can be found at the top of the fiscal note. If no fiscal note has been published, any LCS staff person can connect you to the assigned fiscal analyst, or see the [Fiscal Note Staff Contact List](#) for analysts by subject area.

How do fiscal notes affect which committees must hear bills?

The Speaker and President assign each bill to a committee (or sometimes multiple committees) when it is introduced in their respective chamber. The Speaker and President also publish a [routing memo](#) each session to provide guidance to committee chairs about additional committees that should hear bills that have fiscal impacts identified in the fiscal note. Typically, bills with a revenue impact will be routed to the Finance committee and bills with an expenditure impact will be routed to the Appropriations committee.

How is a fiscal note prepared?

To prepare the fiscal note, fiscal analysts canvass impacted state agencies and use other available data and information sources to develop our estimate. The published fiscal note represents the fiscal analyst's conclusions. Please let the fiscal analyst know if there is any information that you would like LCS to consider in their estimate.

What if there are questions or disagreement about the fiscal note?

Please let the fiscal analyst know. The fiscal analyst is available to discuss the fiscal impact with the bill sponsor, other legislators and interested persons, and to testify in committee if there are questions. At any point in the process, a fiscal note can be updated to reflect new information or assumptions.

When is a fiscal note revised?

A fiscal note will be revised if amendments substantially change the bill or the bill's fiscal impact, or if new information becomes available that changes the estimate. Once a fiscal note has been published in advance of a committee, LCS typically does not prepare a revised fiscal note until after the bill has passed out of that committee.

There is a proposed amendment that changes the fiscal impact of a bill. Can I request a new fiscal note?

LCS does not revise fiscal notes until amendments have been adopted. Fiscal analysts can review amendments prior to being offered and, time permitting, prepare a memorandum describing how the amendment will change the bill's fiscal impact. Analysts are also available to provide testimony in committee concerning amendments.

What happens when an amendment is adopted?

Fiscal analysts review all amendments to bills. If amendments are adopted that change the fiscal impact, the analyst will revise the fiscal note for the next committee hearing, typically the appropriations or finance committee. If amendments do not change the fiscal impact, the note is typically revised for the first committee hearing in the second house. If a bill has been referred to the Appropriations Committee, the fiscal analyst will work with the JBC analyst to ensure that the bill receives the correct appropriation.

Where can I find more information on fiscal notes?

For more detailed information, please see the resources on our website, or contact any fiscal analyst. The website can be found at: <http://leg.colorado.gov/agencies/legislative-council-staff/fiscal-notes>.